

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
IO-14 OMB-01 ACDA-12 SSM-05 MCT-01 HA-05 TRSE-00
EUR-12 /120 W

-----086811 130744Z /17

R 130645Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0422
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS KUWAIT 1478

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: XF, EG, IS, UR

SUBJ: KUWAITI PRESS ON THE EVE OF BEGIN'S PLANNED RETURN TO US

1. KUWAITI EDITORIALISTS HAVE NOT
YET REACTED TO THE MARCH 11 TERRORIST ATTACK ON THE
HAIFA-TEL AVIA ROAD NOR ITS EFFECTS UPON BEGIN'S
PLANNED TRAVEL TO THE U.S., BUT DURING THE PAST FEW
DAYS KUWAITI PRESS COMMENTARY HAS CONCENTRATED ON ALLEGED
U.S. FAILURE TO EXERT PRESSURE ON ISRAEL AND ON THE
ASSERTED HARDENING OF ISRAELI POSITIONS OVER THE PAST
WEEKS. IMPLIED CRITICISM OF SADAT HAS CONTINUED.

2. ANALYSIS OF ISRAELI POSITION.
AL-QABAS (MARCH 10) CHARGED THAT WHENEVER ISRAEL'S
PRIME MINISTER SPOKE OF PEACE...HE GRADUALLY INCREASED
HIS STUBBORNESS AND HARD-LINE POSITION...WHEREAS THE
PRESIDENT OF EGYPT REACTED IN THE OPPOSITE MANNER."
AL-WATAN (MARCH 10) CALLED FOR AN ARAB RESPONSE TO
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THE ISRAELI POSITION ON UN RESOLUTION 242, AND AL RAI
AL AM (MARCH 10) ASSERTED THAT BY THIS POSITION ISRAEL
HAS SHOWN THAT IT WANTS BOTH PEACE AND LAND, THUS TEN
YEARS HAVE BEEN "LOST" TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

3. ATTACK ON U.S. ATTITUDE. AL-UKBAS (MARCH 11)
EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THE EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE HAD

REVEALED THE TRUE ISRAELI POSITION AND HAD BEGUN TO UNCOVER THE U.S. POSITION, THOUGH "PRESIDENT CARTER'S POSITIONS HAVE BEEN FLUCTUATING TO THE EXTENT THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE THEIR TRUE BASIC AIMS." AL RAI AL AM (MARCH 12) CHARGED THAT "AMERICA AND AMERICAN LEADERS" HAVE A "SUPERIORITY COMPLEX" AND CANNOT BE COUNTED ON TO PLAY A TRUE MEDIATORY ROLE, YET SOME NAIVELY BELIEVE THAT THE U.S. CAN BE CHANGED FROM "A MANUFACTURER OF AGGRESSION TO A PEACE-MAKING PARTNER.

4. COMMENTS ON SOVIET AND SYRIAN POSITIONS. IN A RARE REFERENCE IN KUWAIT TO SOVIET MIDDLE EAST POLICY, AL WATAN (MARCH 11) CALLED ON THE SOVIETS TO "GIVE UP" ON THE GENEVA PROCESS, SINCE "ALL THE COVERS HAVE FALLEN AWAY FROM THE PLANS TO DRAW THE ARABS AND THEIR FRIENDS" (INCLUDING THE USSR) INTO CONTROVERSY OVER RESOLUTION 242. REGARDING THE CURRENT SYRIAN POSTURE, AL QABAS (MARCH 9) COMMENTED THAT PRESIDENT ASSAD HAS REMAINED STRONG AND PROTECTED HIS ROOM TO MANEUVER, AND TO RETREAT FROM AN UNDESIRABLE SITUATION, QUALITIES WHICH EVEN THE ISRAELI PRESS REPORTEDLY HAD RECOGNIZED.

4. COMMENT: IN OTHER WORDS, KUWAITI PRESS (HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY PALESTINIAN ATTITUDES)
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SEEMS TO HAVE GIVEN UP ON ANY PEACE PROCESS, BE IT THE SADAT INITIATIVE, US MEDIATION, OR EVEN A GENEVA CONFERENCE.
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